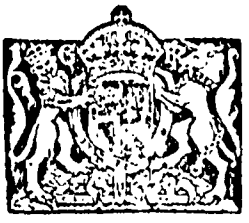

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Annual Report

on the

Administration of the Bombay Maternity Benefit Act, 1929

For the year ending 30th June 1932

[Price—Anna 1 *or* 1*d.*]

BOMBAY
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1932

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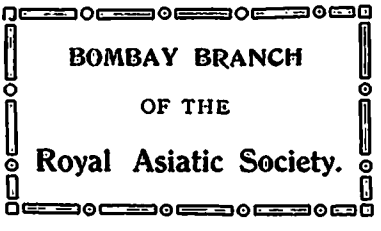

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on 01 February, 2020

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XXII

No. F.I. 2497 of 1932.

BOMBAY COLLECTOR'S OFFICE,
FACTORY DEPARTMENT:
28th September 1932.

From

A. MASTER, Esq., C.I.E., I.C.S.,
Collector of Bombay
(Factory Department);

To

"

THE CHIEF SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT,
Political Department.

Subject.—Annual Report on the working of the Bombay Maternity Benefit Act, 1929, for the year ending 30th June 1932.

Sir,

I have the honour to forward herewith the Annual Report on the working of the Bombay Maternity Benefit Act, 1929, for the year ending 30th June 1932 from the Chief Inspector of Factories.

2. The details in paragraph 6 of the way in which expenditure is incurred are interesting. I had previously expressed the opinion that it was questionable whether women workers do spend money on ante-natal treatment or special foods, and it appears that the amount is comparatively small. Exception cannot be taken to the expenditure of money on clothes, ceremony and ornaments according to social requirements, but it cannot be assumed that extra concessions would do more than encourage further expenditure on social necessities.

3. The figures of places of confinements are of interest. More women go to maternity homes or utilize nurses in Bombay City than I should have expected. This I suppose is the combined results of the Lady Inspector's work and the Infant Welfare Society.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient servant,

A. MASTER,
Collector of Bombay.

THE BOMBAY MATERNITY BENEFIT ACT, 1929.

REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING THE 30TH JUNE 1932.

1. Returns were received from 374 of the 389 factories amenable to the Act. The few outstanding concerns employed few women, and probably did not pay any benefit.

2. The Act was extended during the year to the outstanding factories in the Khandesh and Sholapur areas, to the districts of Dharwar, Thana and Kaira, and to the City of Poona.

3. The usual statistical information is appended.

4. 5,455 benefits were granted compared with 5,231 in the previous year, and the amount paid was Rs. 1,28,542, an increase of about Rs. 7,000, over the preceding year.

The claims paid per 100 women increased slightly in Bombay, but the percentage, viz. 6·8, was considerably lower than in Ahmedabad and Sholapur where the high rates of the previous year were maintained. It appears certain that the birth rates amongst textile women in these centres are considerably higher than in Bombay. It is possible that the rates may be some reflex of the relative differences in industrial prosperity.

The average benefit paid was Rs. 23-9-0. This, a slight increase over last year, very closely approximates to the maximum of Rs. 24-8-0, and indicates that the average woman is making almost full use of the pre-confinement period of abstention from work.

5. Employers, as a whole, continued to treat claims liberally, and although the claims in a few of the areas to which the Act has recently been extended have not come up to expectation, the causes are due to a failure of the women to give the requisite notice, and to a feeling that the Act, which insists on a higher rate of benefit than the average earnings in several mofussil areas, is somewhat oppressive.

Steps have already been taken to inform the women of their privileges and also of the qualifying requirements, whilst the mofussil employers' point of view regarding the rate of benefit has been supported.

6. The manner in which expenditure is being incurred is of some importance, and was enquired into by Dr. Cama, the Lady Inspector of Factories. Enquiries were made from 157 women in 17 Bombay mills divided into 4 groups.

The average expenditure under different items was as follows :—

Milk.	Household maintenance expenses.	Extra food (excluding milk).	Dai.	Clothes.	Ceremony.	Ornaments.	Medicine.	Total.
Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.
1 13 0	9 7 0	2 11 0	2 13 0	5 0 0	5 13 0	1 10 0	0 9 0	28 12 0

Only 15 of the women went to their villages for confinement, and of the remaining 142, 71 were confined in their homes by dais, 11 obtained the services of a nurse, 32 went into maternity homes and 28 did not receive any skilled assistance.

A considerable variation in individual expenditure was noticed, but the figures prove how little is being spent on milk. Ceremonial expenditure varied considerably according to custom, and the economic status of the family. The Mochis appear to spend considerably more than the Marathas in this direction, and an expenditure of Rs. 60 was found in one case. A regular bean feast followed the birth of the child. In some instances, particularly where the women were sole earners, practically the whole of the benefit was spent in maintaining the household.

The infant mortality was 55 or 35 per cent.

There can be no question of the value of the benefit to working women, and although mill women in Bombay still rely on the dai and on unskilled assistance, the figures prove that a considerable change has taken place in the last decade, since Dr. Barnes found in 1922 that 75 per cent. of mill women in Bombay did not obtain skilled assistance. It is clear that the Maternity Benefit Act, and efforts made by Government and the Municipality supplemented by the Wadia Hospital, and the voluntary efforts of the Infant Welfare Society have done a great deal to alleviate the lot of working women in Bombay.

7. The Infant Welfare Society supplemented their infant welfare centre and maternity home in Worli by another in the Parel area. Both these are housed in two of the Development buildings and Government assisted by providing them rent free. They are both very popular, and it is hoped that the following information will point to the necessity of either Municipal or Infant Welfare activities in the somewhat neglected Sewri area.

18 out of 30 women in the Byculla group obtained either the services of a Municipal or Infant Welfare nurse or went to a maternity home, whilst 13 out of 29 in the Parel area obtained similar aid. In the Sewri group, no woman obtained the aid of a Municipal or Infant Welfare nurse, and only 3 out of 35 went to a maternity home.

8. The Lady Inspector has taken pains to acquaint many women of the facilities and advantages offered in several areas and useful propaganda has been undertaken by the contribution of articles to the Millowners' Magazine. Matters dealing with the health of the mothers and the care of the children have been specially published, together with advice on the spending of the benefit to the best advantage. In the latter connection it is felt that it would be of distinct advantage if the Act would permit, subject to suitable safeguards, the payment of part of the benefit when a woman absents herself from work.

T. W. JOHNSTONE,

Factory Inspection Office,
Old Custom House, Fort,
Bombay. 14th September 1932.

Chief Inspector of Factories,
Bombay Presidency.

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on 01 February, 2020

Statement accompanying the Administration Report on the working of the Bombay Maternity Benefit Act, 1929, for the year ending June 1932.

Town or District.	Average number of women employed daily.	Number of women who claimed maternity benefits, section 6(1).	Number of women who were paid maternity benefits for actual births.	Number of other persons who were paid maternity benefits, section 7.	Total amount of maternity benefit paid.	Claims paid per 100 women employed.	Claims paid per 100 women employed in the year ending 30th June 1931.	Remarks.
					Rs. a. p.			
Bombay	29,879	2,385	2,012	27	47,251 4 0	6·8	6·1	
Thana	235	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
Bombay Suburban ...	2,386	212	310	3	6,942 8 0	13·1	10·3	
Ahmedabad	12,433	2,477	2,192	23	52,631 8 0	17·8	18·1	
Viramgam	322	46	35	.....	779 8 0	10·8	4·2	
Broach	494	39	34	.....	1,039 4 0	6·9	9·7	
Kaira	189	13	12	.....	273 8 0	6·3	.....	
Surat	242	27	24	.....	580 0 0	9·9	13·6	
East Khandesh	988	63	64	.....	1,256 8 0	6·5	5·7 Jalgaon. 16·4 Amalner.	Shown separately last year.
West Khandesh	419	14	5	.....	89 8 0	1·2	.....	
Poona	97	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
Sholapur	4,429	667	584	2	14,563 8 0	13·2	13·5	
Belgaum	24	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
Dharwar	792	51	49	1	926 8 0	6·8	.....	
Karachi	508	91	77	1	2,208 8 0	15·3	17·1	
Total	53,487	6,185	5,398	57	1,28,542 0 0	10·2	10·06	

Factory Inspection Office,
Old Custom House, Fort,
Bombay, 14th September 1932.

T. W. JOHNSTONE,
Chief Inspector of Factories,
Bombay Presidency.

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